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Title: Need to accord the status of a Central University to Gandhigram Rural University, Tamil Nadu.

SHRI A.V. BELLARMIN (NAGERCOIL): The present Gandhigram Rural University in Tamil Nadu started its sojourn in 1956 in the name of Gandhigram Rural Institute. But its role in the history of India's National Education Movement is scintillating.

It was the first step to bid farewell to Macaulay's pattern of Education which was involved in manufacturing clerks and accountants to the need of the alien Rule. It adopted a practice-based, life-oriented and value-based educational framework through a synthesis of internationally-known experiments due to Gandhi, Tagore and similar luminaries in the field of Education and human development from other Nations in the world. It is pertinent to bring it to the attention of the Government that this is the only University surviving today out of the fourteen established across the country on the basis of Dr. Radhakrishnan's Report on Rural University.

Today, in the changing scenario that warrants empowerment and enlightenment to the people of Rural India, patronizing this Rural University has become an imperative need. While other States are having one or the other Central Universities under various names and styles, there is no Central University in Tamil Nadu. The Gandhigram Rural University in Tamil Nadu should, therefore, be transformed into a Central University. If transformed into a Central University, it will serve a long way in building a knowledge centre supporting the Government in evolving models, projects, in activating Panchayatraj, World Bank Projects on poverty alleviation, Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana, NREGS. Needless to mention that Gandhigram Rural University have at present project links with UN (UNDP-UNESCO, UNICEF) WHO, ILO and with some other world Institutions like CARC, FORD Foundation. As such, elevation of Gandhigram Rural University into a Central University will be a befitting bouquet to it to facilitate it in its Golden Jubilee Year. [R31]